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THE MILLENNIUM

A DISCUSSION OF THE QUESTION

"Do the Scriptures teach that there is to be a Millennium?"

AFFIRMATIVE BY

WM. E. BLACKSTONE

AUTHOR OF "JESUS IS COMING," "SATAN, HIS KINGDOM AND ITS OVERTHROW"

FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

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"But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

—2 Pet. 3:8.

"And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

—Rev. 20:4.

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THE MILLENNIUM

"DO THE SCRIPTURES TEACH THAT THERE IS TO BE A MILLENNIUM?"

DEFINITIONS

At the outset of the discussion of this question it is well to state certain definitions upon which we are agreed. The term Millennium—Mille-annum—a thousand years—as used by both Jewish and Christian scholars, stands for the doctrine of an era of righteous government upon the earth to last a thousand years.

Jewish writers, throughout the Talmud, hold that this Millennium will be chiefly characterized by the deliverance of the Jews from all their enemies, recovery of Palestine and the literal reign of their Messiah in unequalled splendor and prosperity therein.

Pre-millennial Christians hold much in common with the Jews, but also that our Lord Jesus Christ is the Messiah, that He is to return to the earth and overthrow Satan, all ungodly governments and lawlessness; and establish a kingdom of righteousness, having the Church, with himself, as sovereign, Jerusalem as the Capital, regathered and converted Israel as the center, and all nations included, in a universal world-wide kingdom of righteous government.

Post-millennialists hold that the present preaching of the gospel will result in the conversion of the world and usher in a golden era of righteousness and a government of justice and peace, to last a thousand years; after which, the Lord will return for a general judgment and introduction of an eternal state.

The Scriptures mean the Holy Bible, as contained in the Old and New Testaments.

Our question asks whether these Scriptures teach that there is to be any such Millennium.

Affirming this, let us proceed with the discussion.

DOCTRINE OF THE MILLENNIUM

The doctrine of the Millennium* and the concomitant events and conditions, which it embraces, is the pole star of the human race. It materializes the hope, which is embodied, not only in Christian teaching, but in all the great religions of the world. The Chinese look for the return of Confucius; the Hindoos for the tenth reincarnation of Vishnu; the Mohammedans for the coming of the Mahdi, and Christians expectantly wait for the second coming of our Lord Jesus, according to His promise and the numerous prophetic utterances of Scripture.

The expectation of a golden age of just and righteous government is not only wide-spread, but it is also hoary with age. Its deepest root is securely fastened in the Edenic promise, that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.

It is interwoven with all the precious promises and prophetic descriptions of the overthrow of Satan and his followers, and culminates in the definite statement of Revelation that Satan shall be chained for a thousand years. Not one thing is more plainly stated in Scripture than this thousand years of the righteous reign of Jesus and His saints.

Opponents of this doctrine usually begin their arguments by the assertion that the doctrine of a Millennium is nowhere taught in Scripture except in the twentieth chapter of Revelation. The foolishness of such a statement is glaringly apparent, from the fact that the Jews had fully developed the doctrine, as the teaching of Old Testament Scripture, long before the book of Revelation or any portion of the New Testament was written.

The foregleams of the Millennium are in the book of

---

* Millennium (Latin) is the same as Chiliad (Greek) and both mean a thousand years.

Genesis and we shall see how their shining increases, in the pre-exile, exilic and post-exilic prophets of Israel.

It was the view most frequently expressed in the Talmud, "that the Messianic Kingdom would last for one thousand years," and this was commonly believed among the Jews.

Jesus and the Apostles have given great prominence, in the Scriptures, to this inspiring theme, and it is admitted on all sides that the pre-millennial coming of Christ and His reign with His saints upon the earth a thousand years, was the faith of the early church.

We must be content to select only a few of the many authorities upon this point.

Moshiem says: "The prevailing opinion that Christ was to come and reign a thousand years among men before the final dissolution of the world, had met with *no opposition previous* to the time of Origen." (Vol. 1, p. 89.)

Giesler says: "In all the works of this period (the first two centuries) Millenarianism is so prominent that we can not hesitate to consider it as universal." (Church Hist., Vol. 1, p. 215.)

Bishop Newton says: "The doctrine of the Millennium (as held by Millenarians) *was generally believed in the first three and purest ages.*" (Dissertations on the Prophecies, p. 527.)

Bishop Russell, though an anti-Millenarian, says: "Down to the beginning of the fourth century, *the belief was* universal and undisputed." (Discourse on the Millennium, p. 26.)

Gibbon, who is an unprejudiced witness, in his history of Rome (Vol. 1, p. 262), says: "The ancient and popular doctrine of the Millennium was carefully inculcated by a succession of Fathers, from Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, who conversed with the immediate disciples of the Apostles, down to Lactantius, who was the preceptor of the son of Constantine. It appears to have been the reigning sentiment of orthodox believers."

He also says: "As long as this error (as he calls it) was permitted to subsist in the Church, it was productive of the

most salutary effects on the faith and practice of Christians."

Could an historian give higher praise? Thank God for such an encomium on this blessed doctrine. Is it not an excellent antidote for the worldliness and indifference of the Church in these days?

Even Dr. Daniel Whitby,—father of modern post-millennialism,—in his "Treatise on Traditions," candidly acknowledges that "the doctrine of the Millennium passed among the best of Christians, for two hundred and fifty years, for a tradition apostolical, and as such is delivered by many fathers of the second and third centuries, who speak of it as a tradition of our Lord and His Apostles, and of all the ancients who lived before them."

Lest anyone should lose the full force of these quotations, it may be proper to state, that this "ANCIENT AND POPULAR DOCTRINE OF THE MILLENNIUM," as Gibbon styles it, was the belief in the pre-millennial coming of Christ and His reign on the earth for a thousand years. It was commonly called Chiliasm, from the Greek word Chiliad, meaning one thousand. On such incontrovertible evidence do we affirm the universal belief of the early Church, in the doctrine of the Millennium. It would be profitable to trace its history down through the ages, and see how it shines forth in every great awakening of the Church. Melancthon and Charles Wesley were Millennialists. So were the great missionaries, Ben Ezra, Joseph Wolf, James McGreggor, Bertram, L. D. Manfield, Gonsalves, Dr. Kalley, Hewitson and Bishop Heber, who gave us that grand hymn, "From Greenland's Icy Mountains." It was the hope that energized Gutzlaff, the opener of China, and Bettleheim, the opener of Japan; and that inspired the noble Duff and McCheyne, Lowrie, Rankin and Lowenthal, Guinness, Spurgeon and Hudson Taylor, Moody, Whittle, Bliss and an army of modern evangelists.

It numbers Volck, Bengel, Delitzsch, Dean Alford, Jameison, Faussett and many other commentators of renown as its advocates and defenders. We rejoice to join this holy

company of apostles, fathers, martyrs and devout servants of God, in defense of the faith once delivered unto the saints.

But we do not forget that our question asks, "Do the *Scriptures* teach that there is to be a Millennium?" Therefore let us seek "unto the law and to the testimony."

THE SABBATH OF GOD'S WEEKS

The doctrine of a literal Millennium has a solid foundation in the Scriptural account of the creation. It is recorded in the first and second chapters of Genesis that God created the heavens and earth, and all that in them is, in six days, but the *seventh* day He rested from all His work. Wherefore He hallowed the *seventh* day and established, by His unalterable fiat, based upon His own example, the law of the *Sabbath.*

Let it be noted that this recurrence of the *seventh* day is not measured by astronomical movements like the day, month or year. It is, however, ingrained into the constitution of all life, both vegetable, animal and human. This law of completion in *weeks* is illustrated by gestation and disease. Even fevers run their course in *weeks.*

The human body is said to change its material substance once in seven years.

Music is based upon seven notes.

This division of time into *sevens,* or *weeks,* permeates the entire Scriptures.

A fundamental enactment, of the Mosaic law, was the keeping of the *Sabbath.* (Ex. 20:8.) Not only was the *week* of days reaffirmed which had been established, from the creation, but a *week* of weeks unto Pentecost was provided (Lev. 23:15-16), a *week* of months, with the Atonement and *seven* days' feast of Tabernacles in the *seventh* month (Lev. 23:27-28), and a *week* of years, ending with the *Sabbatic* year (Lev. 25:4), and also a *week* of *weeks* of years ending with a *seventh* Sabbatic year and followed by the year of Jubilee. (Lev. 25:8-12.)

The people and even the land were to rest on these recurring *seventh* years, both Sabbatic and Jubilee. God made special provision that the earth should bring forth so fruitfully on the sixth years, that there should be enough for man and beast to last over the *seventh* year of rest. (Lev. 25:20-22.)

This law of *sevens* is also illustrated in the punishments of Israel. Their captivity in Babylon was for *seventy* years. (Jer. 25:11-12, Dan. 9:2.)

The great period revealed to Daniel (Ch. 9), unto the coming of the Messiah was divided into *seventy sevens.* (Dan. 9:24.)

The unequaled period of Israel's punishment and dispersion in the lands of their enemies, prophesied by Moses in Lev. 26, is with four fold emphasis, specified to be for *seven times.* See verses 18, 21, 24 and 28.

The sacred year of the Jews began, by divine appointment, in the *seventh* civil month. (Ex. 12:2; 13:4; 1 Ki. 8:2.)

The Passover was on the (twice *seven*) fourteenth day of the *seventh* month. (Ex. 12:6.)

Seven days were they to eat unleavened bread. (Deut. 16:3.)

The wave sheaf was to be on the first day after the *Sabbath* in the beginning of harvest. (Lev. 23:10-11.)

It was *seven* weeks thereafter to Pentecost. (Lev. 23:15-16.)

In the *seventh* sacred month was the feast of Trumpets, Atonement and Tabernacles. (Lev. 23:24-36.)

Seven days were they to dwell in booths. (Lev. 23:39-43.)

This sacred *seven* is woven into the laws, life and history of the chosen people, with whom God established his theocracy.

THE MILLENNIAL SABBATH

Two great and precious facts are founded upon this unalterable law of the *Sabbath:*

First—That God has decreed a great day of rest, a keeping of the *Sabbath,* for the whole world.

Second—That this *Sabbath* is to be a thousand years, or the *seventh millennium.*

The first proposition is forcibly argued by the Apostle in the 4th chapter of Hebrews; wherein he shows that the Israelites did not enter into God's rest, by reason of unbelief. Joshua did not give them rest. On the contrary, because of their unbelief and rebellious conduct, their carcasses fell in the wilderness. So, likewise, Jesus, our Joshua, had come to lead them into rest. He came unto His own—the lost sheep of the house of Israel—and His own received Him not. (John 1:11.) He would have delivered them and established the kingdom. He said the Kingdom of God is among you (not within you). (Lu. 17:21, see margin.)

The king was there and the kingdom, coming not with scrupulous observation (So the Gr., Lu. 17:20), was ready to be manifested among them.

But in unreasonable and blind unbelief, they rejected their Messiah and with wicked hands nailed Him to the cross. Then He, like the nobleman's son, of whom He had spoken, went into a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom and return, for His kingdom is not (ek) out of this world. (John 18:36.)

But the Apostle shows that, notwithstanding this unbelief, and twice rejecting the offer of rest, by them to whom the gospel was preached, there still remains a rest, a *keeping of the Sabbath,* for the people of God. (Heb. 4:9.)

The Lord help us all to heed the injunction that we ourselves may not fail to enter into it, by the same reason of unbelief.

Our second proposition, that this Sabbath rest is to last for a thousand years, is founded upon the Scriptural *week* of Creation.

In *six* days God made the heavens and the earth and all that in them is, but on the *seventh* day He rested. Six days of labor and one of rest.

In the 90th Psalm, we have the great fact stated, that a thousand years with God are as one day. "A thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday." Lest we should construe this loosely, as a mere illustration of the brevity of time, in the sight of God, the Apostle Peter (2 Pet. 3:8) has emphatically guarded the fact, by a combined, double and reverse reiteration of the statement, prefacing it with a word of warning. Listen to his words:

"Forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Upon this rock we can consistently base our conclusion that as we have the Scriptural *week, week* of *weeks, week* of months, *week* of years, *week* of *weeks* of years, *week* of seventy years and *week* of times, we shall also have a *week* of millenniums. Six thousand-year days of labor, and then the blessed *seventh* millennium, a thousand years of rest.

THE WEEK OF AIONS

We have another line of proof, which runs through the whole of Scripture. It may be briefly stated as follows: All continuity of being or existence is measured by what we call time. Time is divided by the fundamental intermittent or wave principle into pulsations, or vibrations. A fly's wing makes 300 or more strokes in a second. In an alternating electrical current we can detect 100,000 vibrations in a second. But this is sluggish compared with alternations of light, which are said to be hundreds of millions of times in a second, and no one can tell how much more infinitesimal such vibrations may be, for they are like the indiscernible ultimate atoms.

From such unthinkable divisibility, we pass upward, through the discernible vibrations, into the common measurements of time, to-wit: seconds, minutes, hours, days, weeks, months, years, sabbatic years and Jubilees. Man has placed next, above jubilees, centuries, but centuries are not a Scriptural measurement.

The next Scriptural measurement of time is called in the Hebrew an *olam* and in the Greek an *aion*. This term *aion* has been transferred into the English, viz.: "eon," from which we derive the word "age."

This word *aion* is used 124 times in the New Testament. Unfortunately, it is translated, in our King James version, by several English words, such as "world," "course," "ages," "end," "ever" and "eternal." The revised version has corrected much of this erroneous translation. The Greek and even the English lexicon tells us that the word is a measure of time, and this is easily seen from its use.

It is impossible to give all the passages where it occurs in the limit of this paper. A few samples will suffice.

The harvest is the end of the *aion* (not cosmos-world). Matt. 13: 39-40.

What shall be the sign of Thy coming and of the end of the *aion* (not cosmos-world)? Matt. 24: 3.

Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for an *aion* (not aidios—eternal—forever). Matt. 21:29.

"For the *aion*" (not forever). Luke 1:55; John 6:51, 58; 8:35, etc.

"The children of this *aion*" (not world) "are * * * wiser than the children of light." Lu. 16:8.

"The children of this *aion*" (not world) "marry * * * but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that *aion* * * * neither marry nor are given in marriage." Lu. 20:34-35.

"Not only in this *aion,* but also in that which is to come." Eph. 1:21.

"The mystery which from the *aions*" (plural) "hath been hid." Eph. 3:9.

"That in the *aions* to come." Eph. 2:7.

"Now unto the king of the *aions.*" 1 Tim. 1:17.

"By whom also he made the *aions.*" Heb. 1:2.

"Both now and throughout all the *aions.*" Jude 25.

"Unto Him be glory * * * throughout all the generation of the *aion*" (singular) "of the *aions*" (plural). Eph. 3:21.

"The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for *aions*" (plural) "of *aions*" (plural). Rev. 14:11.

"Her smoke rose up for *aions* of *aions.*" Rev. 19:3.

"Shall be tormented day and night for *aions* of *aions.*" Rev. 20:10.

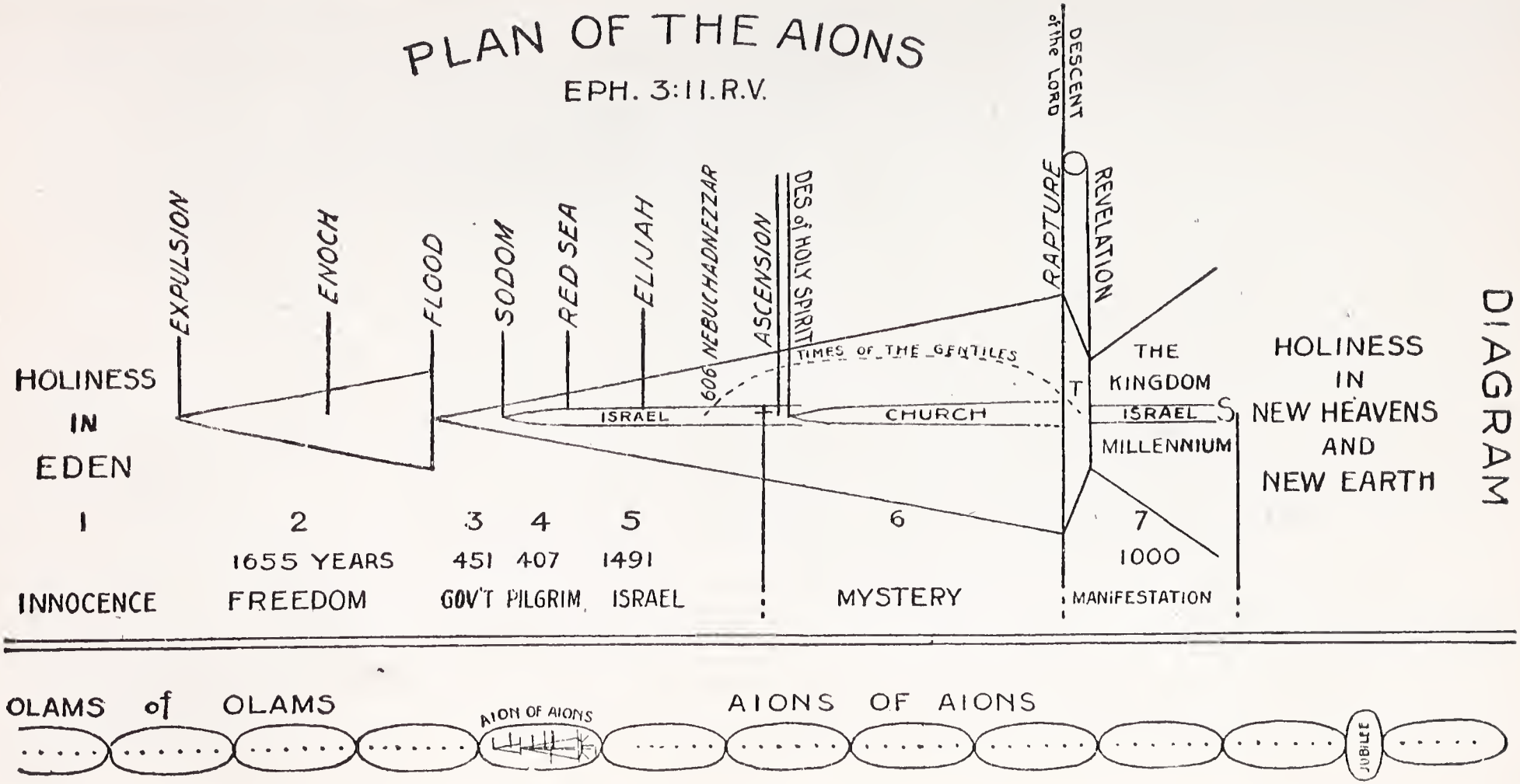
"They shall reign for *aions* of *aions.*" Rev. 22:5.

Notice that we have the singular *aion,* the plural *aions,* an *aion* of *aions,* a great aion composed of aions, the *week* of aions (see diagram), and the multiplied form, *aions* of *aions.*

It will be seen from the above that an *aion* has an end, and, as another follows, it must have a beginning. That there have been many in the past and there are to be many in the future. Jesus is the King of the *aions* (1 Tim. 1:17), they are all made by Him (Heb. 1:2), and they are all arranged on a plan. "According to the purpose (plan) of the aions." Eph. 3:11, R. V.

PLAN OF THE AIONS

EPH. 3:11. R.V.



DIAGRAM

The seven aions-dispensations are numbered 1 to 7.

The first, Eden, terminates with the expulsion.

The second, Antediluvian, terminates with the flood.

The third, Postdiluvian, terminates with the overthrow of Sodom.

The fourth, Patriarchal, terminates with the Red Sea.

The fifth, Mosaic, terminates with the Crucifixion.

The sixth, Christian, terminates with the Rapture and Revelation.

The seventh, Millennial, terminates with Satan's final overthrow.

Then follows the new Heavens and new Earth.

The character of each dispensation is indicated by the words innocence, freedom, etc.

The spreading lines indicate the increase of population.

Israel is shown as a distinct people among the nations, from the time of Abraham to the Crucifixion, and destruction of Jerusalem.

Then they are scattered like seed among all nations throughout the Christian dispensation and again gathered as the center of the Millennial kingdom. The small cross represents the crucifixion and descent of Christ's spirit into hades, followed by His resurrection and ascension into heaven, the descent of the Holy Spirit and commencement of the Church—the body of Christ—distinct from Jew or Gentile during this dispensation.

The dotted line marks "the times of the Gentiles" running from Nebuchadnezzar to antichrist, during which Israel is under the Gentile dominion of the four great empires, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, represented by the image in Dan. 2.

RAPTURE.—The resurrection of those that sleep in Jesus, and change of living believers (1 Cor. 15:23, 51, 52), who are caught away to meet the Lord in the air (1 Thes. 4:17). Enoch and Elijah are types of this Rapture.

M.—The meeting of Christ and His bride. 1 Thes. 4:17; Eph. 5:21-32; 2 Cor. 11:2.

This is our gathering together unto Him. 2 Thes. 2:1.

And the marriage of the Lamb. Matt. 22:2-10; 25:10; Luke 14:15-24; Rev. 19:7-8.

So shall we ever be with the Lord. John 12:26; 14:3; 17:24; 1 Thes. 4:17.

It is the Hope of the Church. Phil 3:20-21; Tit. 2:13; 1 Jno. 3:2-3.

It is the redemption mentioned in Luke 21:28; Rom. 8:23; Eph. 4:30.

Wherefore comfort one another with these words. 1 Thes. 4:18.

Thus the church escapes the tribulation. Luke 21:36; 2 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 3:10.

TRIBULATION.—Then follows a period of unequaled tribulation to the world (Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21; Luke 21:25-26), during which, the true church having been taken out, God begins to deal with Israel again (Acts 15:13-17; Psa. 51:18; 102:16). He allows them to gather themselves (Zeph. 2:1-2), they make a covenant with antichrist (Dan. 9:27), and pass through great judgments and affliction, until at last they look upon Him whom they have pierced (Zech. 12:10), and they are saved and restored (Isa. 11:11, 60; Jer. 30:3; Jer. 31; 32:36-44; Zech. 10:10; Rom. 11) never more to be pulled up out of their land. Amos 9:15; Ezek. 34:28.

Antichrist will be revealed. 2 Thes. 2:8; Rev. 13.

The vials of God's wrath poured out. Psa. 2:1-5; Rev. 6:16-17; 14:10; Rev. 16.

REVELATION.—Revelation of Christ and His saints (the Church His body) descending to the earth (Col. 3:4; 1 Thes. 3:13) in flaming fire (2 Thes. 1:7-10) to execute judgment on the earth. Jude 14, 15. Then follow the destruction of antichrist. 2 Thes. 2:8. The beast and false prophet are taken. Rev. 19. Gog and his allies are smitten. Ezek. 38:39. Satan is bound. Rev. 20:1-3; Rom. 16:20. The judgment of the nations or the quick. Matt. 25:31-46; 19:28; Acts 10:42; 1 Pet.

4:5. The resurrection of the tribulation saints, which completes the First Resurrection. Rev. 20:4-6.

THE KINGDOM.—The Millennium. Christ's glorious reign on earth for a thousand years (Rev. 20:4), with His bride or body. 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 5:10; Isa. 2:2-5 and 4 and 11:1-12 and 25:6-9 and 32:1-2 and 65:18-25; Mich. 4:1-4; Zeph. 3:14-20; Zech. 8:3-8 and 20:23 and 14:16-21.

S.—Satan loosed for a little season, deceiving the nations once more. Gog and Magog are destroyed, and Satan is finally cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:7-10; Heb. 2:14), the fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Matt. 25:41. Then follows the Resurrection of Judgment. Rev. 20:12-15; John 5:29; Dan. 12:2. The judgment at the Great White Throne of all the remaining dead. Rev. 20:11-15. Death and hell (hades) destroyed. Rev. 20:14; 1 Cor. 15:26.

Then "the aions to come" (Eph. 2:7), beginning with the New Heavens and the New Earth.[1]

The lower portion of the diagram shows these seven aions, on a much smaller scale, as an "aion of aions." In the past are the olams of olams and in the future are the aions of aions, showing that eternity is the continued measurement of time.

Aion is the measure of each of the eras, or dispensations, which mark the progress of the universe. They are not all of the same duration, but, so far as we know them, each *aion* marks a change in God's method of dealing with mankind. Probably the *aions* of the past, the ante-Edenic *olams* of the Old Testament, mark the geological periods of the earth, and the various eras in the development of the universe. And, as the past has been an orderly unfolding of Creation and revelation of the Creator, so shall the future be, not a limitless *aion* called eternity, but a limitless

[1] For detailed explanation of this diagram—giving all the passages in which the word aion occurs—and the presentation of other subjects concerning the second coming of Christ—see "Jesus is Coming," by W. E. B. Fleming H. Revell Company, Chicago, New York, Toronto.

succession of *aions* measuring infinite duration. See lower section of the diagram.

But, says one, if *aions* are measured periods then all *aions* are measured; and there will be an end to the sorrows of the ungodly (Rev. 14:11), and to the glory and dominion of the Lamb and his saints. Rev. 1:6, 11:15; 22:5.

No! beloved, for the best idea we mortals can have of infinity, or eternity, is that of continued measurement, and this is exactly the idea conveyed by the indefinite expression *aions* of *aions.*

Time is the measure of eternity; and eternity is the continued measurement of time.

Take, for instance, a yard-stick, and it measures only three feet. But turn it over and over and over, and you pass round the world, out to the moon, the sun, the stars, the farthermost nebula, and all the limits of imagination, and still the little measure goes on and on into the unthinkable.

In like manner the Scriptural succession of *aions* measures eternity.

The little section of this mighty plan of the *aions* which covers human history is shown on a large scale in the upper portion of the diagram (p. 14.). It shows *seven* aions—a week of *aions.* The diverging lines represent the increase of population, suddenly cut down to eight at the flood and to be again greatly reduced at the close of the present dispensation.

Notice that each *aion,* or dispensation, begins in grace and ends in judgment.

1. The *aion* of holiness in Eden, termniating in the expulsion.

2. The Antediluvian, terminating in the flood. During this *aion* Enoch is caught up, a type of the coming rapture of the Church.

3. The Post-diluvian, terminating in the destruction of Sodom.

4. The Patriarchal, terminating in the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red Sea.

5. The Mosaic or Jewish, terminating in the crucifixion and destruction of Jerusalem. In this Elijah becomes another type of the coming rapture of the Church.

6. The Christian, to terminate in the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21), the coming of our Lord, the overthrow of Satan's kingdom and the judgment of nations. During this *aion* the Jews are scattered like seed among all nations. Amos 9:8-9; Lu. 21:24.

7. The Millennial Kingdom, terminating in Satan's last deception and the judgment of the great white throne. Rev. 20:7-15.

These *seven* make a *week* of *aions* corresponding to the expression in Eph. 3:21, *aion* of *aions.*

Beyond this is the "New Heavens" and "New Earth," wherein dwelleth righteousness, the beginning of another series of *aions.* In harmony with the *weeks of years,* appointed unto Israel (Lev. 25:8-11), other great *aions,* that is, *weeks* of *aions,* are to follow, corresponding to the repeated expression *aions* of *aions.*

How vain it seems for any one to assert, in the face of such overwhelming Scriptural testimony, that the present Christian dispensation is the final *aion* of human history upon the earth. Some even assert that Matt. 13:39-40; 24:3, etc., speak of the end of the world, instead of the end of the age, or *aion.*

Again, it is often asserted, by so-called scholars, that. after this present dispensation, there is to come an eternal age or *aion.* This cannot be, for the *Scriptures* plainly show that this *aion* is to be followed by the *aion* to come and that there are *aions* and *aions* of *aions* to come, an orderly unfolding of the future, in which our God shall "show the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." Eph. 2:7.

Out of this vast aionian division of time, so clearly and thoroughly set forth in the Scriptures, six *aions* have thus far covered the experiences of our race; and six *aions* of trouble and sorrow have they been. But thank God another is coming, an *aion* of peace and happiness, for it is the first

of those in which God will show the exceeding riches of His grace to us (Eph. 2:7), and hence we conclude it is that thousand-year day of rest which God has promised to the willing and obedient of the children of men.

It may be asked, if the seventh aion is to be a thousand years, why should not the preceding six aions be, each one, a thousand years long? We only know, from history, that each aion is a measured period, in which God manifests a different method in dealing with the human race. Each begins with a fresh manifestation of grace and closes with judgment. So that, while of unequal duration, they are definitely marked eras of time: and the sum of them, from Eden up to the present time, is almost *six thousand years*. The first six days of the week are not ordinarily distinguished one from another, as to the character or occupation, but are taken together. "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Ex. 20:9-10.

So the six aions have been work days for man, of labor and sorrow, but the *seventh* shall be the keeping of a *Sabbath*. The thousand-year day of the Lord.

THE KINGDOM

We have another argument based upon the revelations of Scripture concerning the Kingdom.

God made man in his own image and said: "let them have dominion * * * o ver all the earth." Gen. 1:26. Through sin; man lost the dominion and Satan became ruler—"the god of this world." A train of woe and sorrow has filled the earth through these six days of labor and even in this boasted twentieth century and the Nations are yet plunging on into war, avarice, idolatry and misery, under Satan's deceptions.

But God promised that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Gen. 3.

He hath sworn that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that He is the Lord. Isa. 45:23; Phil. 2: 10, 11.

The knowledge of the Lord shall yet cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. Hab. 2:14.

God called Abraham and promised that, in him and in his seed, all the nations shall be blessed. Gen. 12:3.

He established the Theocracy, through Moses, and gave a code of laws, which have been the foundation of all good government.

He promised that David's house, and his throne, and his kingdom should be established forever (for the olams, or aions). 2 Sam. 7, 16.

He has promised that a "king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment." Isa. 32:1.

He hath promised that "the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and all dominions shall serve and obey Him." Dan. 7:27.

He hath said of Israel, "this people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." Isa. 43:21

"When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Deut. 32:8.

He says, "I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee, but I will not make a full end of thee." Jer. 46:28 and 30:11.

He says, "Israel is the rod of His inheritance," * * * His "battle ax," with which He will break in pieces the nations and destroy kingdoms. Jer. 51:19, 20.

He says they shall be restored to their own land and "shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the Lord thy God." Amos 9:15. Indeed, it is impossible to quote the multitude of Scripture passages which affirm and describe this great dispensational truth, of the restoration of Israel and their glorious kingdom.

Prophecies to the people, like Deut. 30 and Ezek. 37. Prophecies to the nations, like Isa. 34 and 35. Prophecies to the isles and people that are far off, to the heavens and the earth, like Isa. 49. Prophecies to the land itself, its mountains, rivers, valleys and desolate wastes, like Ezek. 36.

The Apostle James summed them all up at the first council of the disciples in Jerusalem, saying: "To this agree the words of the prophets, as it is written; after this" (after the church is taken out, see v. 14) "I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up." Acts 15, 16.

It is amusing, yea, it is astonishing, to see the attempts of many scholars to try to *spiritualize* (as they call it) all these promises and vainly apply them to the church; and tell us that Jesus is now on His "mediatorial throne" reigning over the church.

There is no such term in Scripture as "*mediatorial* throne." It is man-made, the same as the term "*general* resurrection" or "*general* judgment."

Jesus was received into the heavens and is set down at the right hand of God. He is far above all authority and power, but He is on His Father's throne, from henceforth expecting until his enemies he made His footstool. Psa. 110:1; Mar. 16:19; Heb. 10:12-13.

He is there as a minister, a mediator, the high priest of the true tabernacle, in the heavens (Heb. 8). Head over all, to the church (Eph. 1:24), our intercessor (Rom. 8:34), our advocate (1 John 2:1). He is appearing in the presence of God for us. Heb. 9:24.

But in due time, like the earthly high priest, He shall come forth, out of this heavenly Holy of Holies (Heb. 9:28), appearing the second time, in like manner as He went away. Acts 1:11.

Then shall the church be caught up to meet Him and forever be joined unto her Lord (1 Thes. 4:13-18) to reign with Him forever. 2 Tim. 2:12. Then shall His feet stand upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4) and then shall Israel look upon Him whom they have pierced (Zech. 12:10) and a nation shall be born in a day. Isa. 66:8.

Then shall He sit in *His throne* (Matt. 19:28; Rev. 3:21) as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. 1 Tim. 6:15.

This distinction between the church and the kingdom is fundamental.

The church is the body of the Lord, subject to persecution and affliction, filling up the sufferings of Christ which are left behind, unto the close of Satan's reign as the "prince of this world."

But the kingdom is the restoration of the Theocracy, with Jesus and the Church (head and body—the Christ) as sovereign, Israel as the center; and all nations subdued to a righteous government.

Then shall the Lord sit in His throne and before Him shall be gathered all nations. Matt. 25:31.

Then shall the twelve apostles "sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matt. 19:28. Mark well that these are no fanciful imaginations, but they are the literal words of Scripture.

Then shall "the mountain of the Lord's house be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." Isa. 2:2.

Jesus is not king of the church. He is her bridegroom, her husband. Eph. 5.

But He is the King of Israel. Zech. 9:9; John 1:49.

He was prophesied as King of the Jews. Isa. 9:6.

He was born King of the Jews. Matt. 2:2.

He said He was King of the Jews. Matt. 27:11.

He was crucified as King of the Jews. Matt. 27:37.

"The Lord God hath promised to give Him the throne of His father David and He shall reign over the House of Jacob forever." Luke 1:33.

Yes, the King shall come, and the kingdom shall be restored to Israel.

"And thou, O tower of the flock, the hill of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, yea, the former dominion shall come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem." Mich. 4:8.

Israel shall "arise and shine." They shall "flow together." "The ships of Tarhsish shall bring thy sons from far." "The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls." "The wealth of the nations" shall be brought unto them and "their kings led captive." The "nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." Isa. 60. Israel shall bud and blossom and fill the face of the world with fruit. Isa. 27:6.

It is objected that the kingdom is to be established by the preaching of the gospel, which is to work like leaven until the nations are converted to righteousness. By such reasoning, *men* eliminate the "glorious hope" of our Lord's return (Tit. 2:11-13) and the restoration of Israel and the literal government of this world by Jesus and the saints of the Most High.

What a gloomy vision this puts before us.

Why! at the same rate of progress, which has been made in the past 1800 years, it would take 7400 years to make the

world nominal Christians; and they would all die one generation after another two hundred times.

And how long would it take for a nominally Christian world to become truly and wholly converted to Christ? Alas! we have no data for such a computation. The history of the world presents no such result. The trend is all the other way. Not even a backslidden church has ever been wholly revived. Much less has a nominally Christian nation ever been wholly converted. On the contrary, both are today reckoned as great fields for evangelical missionary effort. Strange indeed, that men will hold and advocate such a hopeless, pessimistic view.

But what saith the Scriptures? The tares and wheat shall grow together unto the end (of the aion). Matt. 13:30. "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse." 2 Tim. 3:13. Perilous times are coming. 2 Tim. 3:1. The great tribulation is before us. (Matt. 24:21), "the day of Jacob's trouble" (Jer. 30:7), the apostacy and the coming of the "man of sin," "the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." 2 Thes. 2:3-4.

Satan will yet make his herculean effort to hold the nations in the grasp of his deceptions.

What is God's method to overthrow the empire of evil? Is it the slow process of the leaven? Nay verily. What saith the Scriptures?

"Wait ye upon me saith the Lord, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation * * * for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." Zeph. 3:8.

It will be quickly done, for He saith, "A short work will I make upon the earth." "He will * * * cut it short in righteousness." Rom. 9:28.

God revealed, through Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, by a colossal image, the whole course of Gentile government—Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian and Roman. It covers the entire history, from the suspension of the Theocracy to

its restoration, when it shall break in pieces all these kingdoms.

How does it break them in pieces? By some slow process? Nay. A stone smites the image on its feet and the whole mass becomes like the chaff of the summer threshing floors and the wind carries them away forever.

Note that the smiting is not in the hips—the strength of the Roman empire, when Jesus came to be crucified—but on the feet, when He shall come again in power and glory.

What will He do to the nations? Listen to the Psalmist: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psa. 2:9.

Note carefully that this is when He sets His King upon His holy hill of Zion, and gives to Him the nations for His inheritance. See verses 6 and 8.

There is no slow nor gentle process about this. But He will deal gently with those that love Him. "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth * * * it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Zeph. 2:3.

Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers * * * hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." Isa. 26:20.

Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Lu. 12:32.

Yes. He shall give them the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. But note carefully they do not inherit it until the Son of Man sits in the throne of His glory and the nations have been gathered and judged. "*Then*" (and not till then) "shall the King say unto them: Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matt. 25:31-34.

Such, beloved is a small portion of the Scripture testimony which affirms the coming of the King, the regathering of Israel and the restoration of the Theocratic kingdom. And as the kingdom immediately follows this dispensation, it can be none other than the "*aion* to come," that *seventh* day of God's great *week* of Millenniums.

POLITICS

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulders: * * * Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isa. 9:6, 7.

"It should be recognized much more than it is, that the Bible is a *political* Book rather than anything else; that the promises and the warnings and the prophecies of the Old Testament, and in a large measure also of the New, are *political;* that Christ Himself is a *political* Character, and that religion is only the highest form of politics. This will be readily understood when we consider that the word "politics" signifies the science of Government, and that it includes the government of a household, of a city, of a province, of a Kingdom, of an Empire, and finally of the Heavens and all they contain. God is therefore the greatest of all Political or Governing Beings, as He is the Head of all Power and Government, whether in Heaven or Earth, and that He has committed all power unto the Son, i. e., to Christ (Isa. 9:6, 7; Matt. 28:18; John 5:22; Col. 2:9, 10; Rev. 12:10). The fact that men forget, ignore, or fail to recognize this, does not alter the great *fact.*"

What men call "natural laws" are simply the uniformity of God's action, in material and temporal affairs. "He alone spreadeth out the heavens * * * maketh Arcturus, Orion and Pleiades * * * doeth great things past finding out." Job 9:8-10. But He also cares for the minutest animalculae and not a "sparrow falls on the ground without Him." Matt. 10:29.

It is often asserted that it would be beneath the dignity of our Lord to attend to the politics of this world. This is

based upon a mistaken idea of His divine character. His omniscience and omnipresence are most forcibly shown in the minutia of detail care. He will "rule the nations with a rod of iron." Rev. 2:27. And He will also care for all the wants of the poor and the needy.

"*In His days* shall the righteous flourish. * * * He shall have dominion also from sea to sea * * * Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him." Psa. 72:7-11.

THE RESURRECTION

We have an unanswerable argument based upon the words of the Scriptures, concerning the resurrection.

The Scriptures teach that all the dead will be raised. "All that are in the graves shall hear His voice and shall come forth." John 5:28-29.

But the expression, "General resurrection," is not in the Scriptures. It is man-made. On the contrary, the Scriptures most clearly teach a difference in *time* for the resurrection of those "that have done good" as contrasted with those "that have done evil." The first class are raised unto *life,* but the other class are raised unto *Judgment.* One is the resurrection of the Just (Luke 14:14) while the other is the resurrection to shame and everlasting contempt. Dan. 12:3. The one is connected with reward, but the other with punishment. "As in Adam *all* die, so in Christ shall *all* be made alive. But each in his own order" (or band) "Christ the first fruits; then (afterward) they that are Christ's at His coming. Then (afterward) cometh the end." 1 Cor. 15:22-26. The Greek *ita,* which is here translated "then," means next in order, but not necessarily immediate, as will be seen by its use in Mark 4:17, 28; 1 Tim. 2:13. The whole figure is taken from the marching of an army—each in their own band or cohort. As there has been eighteen hundred years between the resurrection of Christ and the band at His coming, so there can be centuries between the first and second bands.

This is exactly what is stated in 1 Thes. 4:16: "The dead in Christ shall rise first."

We know that the adjective, first, relates to those saints who are alive on the earth at the coming of the Lord. But that it also refers to a "first resurrection," as compared with those who will be raised later, is evident from the following: If the resurrection of the righteous is to occur centuries be-

fore that of the ungodly, it logically follows that the first class would be spoken of as being raised *from* the dead.

We rejoice in the fact that the Scriptures emphatically make this distinction.

The resurrection of the dead (ton nekron) is applied to all classes (see Matt. 22:31, etc.*), but the resurrection *from* the dead (ek nekron) is never applied, in the Scriptures, to the ungodly. It is always applied to the righteous.

The force of this may be seen by a very simple illustration. If ten apples are taken out of a basketful and afterwards the rest are taken, all will be taken, but only ten are taken *from* the rest.

This expression (Gr. ek nekron) from the dead, occurs 49 times in the New Testament, to-wit: 34 times of Christ's resurrection, whom we know was thus raised (ek) *out of or from the dead.*† 3 times of John's supposed resurrection, whom Herod thought, had been thus raised *out of the dead.*‡ 3 times of the resurrection of Lazarus, who was raised *out of the dead.* 3 times figuratively of spiritual life *out* of the deadness of sin.

It is used in Luke 16:31, "Though one rose *from the dead,*" and in Heb. 11:19, expressing Abraham's faith that God could raise Isaac *from the dead.*

And the remaining four times, it is used to express a future resurrection *out of the dead,* namely, in Mark 12:25, where Jesus says: "When they shall rise *from the dead,* they neither marry, nor are given in marriage: but are as the angels which are in heaven."

In Luke 20:35-36. "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world (aion), and the resurrection which is *from among the dead,* neither marry nor are given in marriage; neither can they die any more." No second

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*Mat. 22:31; Acts 17:32; 23:6; 24:15, 21; 1 Cor. 15:12, 13, 21, 42, and especially John 5:28, 29.

†Mat. 17:9; Mark 9:9, 10; Luke 24:16; John 2:22; 20:9, 21, 14; Acts 3:15; 4:10; 10:41; 13:30, 34; 17:3, 31; 26:23; Rom. 1:4; 4:24; 6:4-9; 7:4; 8:11; 10:7, 9; 1 Cor. 15:12, 20; Gal. 1:1; Eph. 1:20; Col. 1:18; 2:12; 1 Thes. 1:10; 2 Tim. 2:8; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 1:3, 21.

‡Mark 6:14, 16; Luke 9:7.

‖John 12:1, 9, 17.

death for these "For they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

In Acts 4:1-2 we read that "the Sadducees were grieved because Peter and John 'preached through Jesus the resurrection which is *from among the dead.*'"

In Phil. 3:11 the emphasis is remarkable. The preposition *ek* is twice repeated, "teen exanastasin teen ek nekron." The King James translation "of the dead" is corrected in the revised version to "from the dead." But the literal translation is "the RESURRECTION OUT FROM AMONG THE DEAD."

Olshausen declares that the "phrase would be inexplicable if it were not derived from the idea that, out of the mass of the dead, some would rise first."

It is the resurrection of a select class only. Paul as a Pharisee, believed in the fact of a universal resurrection (Acts 23:6-8), but we see, from the foregoing, why he counted all things but loss—if by any means he might attain unto this resurrection FROM AMONG THE DEAD; and he calls it the "BETTER RESURRECTION." Heb. 11:35. It is the resurrection of LIFE. John 5:29; Dan. 12:2.

But there is also to be a "resurrection of JUDGMENT." John 5:29. It is the resurrection of the unjust. Acts 24:15; Dan. 12:2. It is the completion of the resurrection *of* the dead (ton nekron). Hence we see that there is a difference in time, as well as in character, in these orders, or bands, of the resurrection.*

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*The same distinction is made in the Old Testament. "The true rendering of Dan. 12:1-3 in connection with the context, is 'And (at that time) many (of thy people) shall awake (or be separated) *out from among* the sleepers in the earth dust. *These* (who awake) shall be unto life everlasting, but *those* (who do not awake at that time) shall be unto shame and contempt everlasting.' So the most renowned Hebrew doctors render it."

"The *'Those'* who do not awake, at that time, are the wicked dead. Isa. 26:14. They include the 'Slain of the Lord,' Isa. 66:16, whom the Hebrew teachers called *'Shear Hammerthim,' i. e.*, 'the Remainder of the Dead.' * * * *'Many out from among'* cannot mean *'all that are in.'* * * * Dan. 12:1-3 teaches only the *'First resurrection.'* as does Isa. 26:19, its Old Testament companion piece, as Delitzsch calls it. * * * In Rabbinic terms the Resurrection *out from* (min) the dead is called *"Techiyyath Tsadikim,'* 'The making alive of the

And now comes the question, How long is this difference in time?

Jesus said in John 6:39, 40, 44, 54, speaking of believers, "I will raise him up at the last day," and it is objected that, if the righteous are to be raised in the *last* day, there can be no other day for the resurrection *of* the ungodly.

But a moment's reflection upon Peter's admonition, that "a *day* with the Lord is as a *thousand years,*" not only sweeps away the objection, but, in conformity with these great lines of Scripture teaching, shows us that this *last day* is the "day of the Lord," the thousand-year day, the sacred day of *rest* of God's great week of aions. It begins with the resurrection of the righteous, and closes with the resurrection of the rest of the dead. The just and the unjust. And this thousand-year day, of rest and resurrection, is the Scriptural Millennium.

"The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years are finished." Rev. 20:5.

THE JUDGMENT

There is another similar argument, based upon the words of Scripture, concerning the Judgment. Men talk of a "General Judgment," but there is no such term in the Word. On the contrary, the Scriptures tell of at least five distinct Judgments.

1. Of believers, as to character, upon the cross of Christ, so that we shall not come into the judgment of condemnation. John 5:24.

2. Of believers, as to works, at the Judgment seat of Christ. 1 Cor. 4:1-5: 3:13, 15; 2 Cor. 5:9, 10; Rom. 14:10, 12.

Righteous.' or '*Techiyyath Hammethim,*' 'The making alive of the Dead;' and differs from the '*Amdath Hammethim,*' or mere 'Standing up of the Dead.'" See Rev. Nathaniel West, D. D., in "The Thousand Years in Both Testaments."

Note carefully that the Hebrew expression *"Shear Hammethim"* means "Rest of the Dead." the very words used by John, Rev. 20:5, to designate those who rise not until the thousand years are finished, and who after the thousand years *Stand* before God. Rev. 20:12.

3. Of the living nations, at the beginning of the Millennium. Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 10:42; 2 Tim. 4:1; 1 Pet. 4:5.

4. Of the "rest of the dead" at the close of the Millennium, before the great white throne. Rev. 20:12-15.

5. The Judgment of angels. 1 Cor. 6:3; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6.

SUFFERINGS AND GLORY

Let us add, to the foregoing arguments, the important statement of the Holy Spirit, through the Apostle Peter. The prophets "sought and searched diligently,—searching what *time,* or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand the suffering of Christ, and the glories that should follow them." 1 Pet. 1:10-11 R. V.

Mark it carefully, that the glory follows the sufferings. The term "Christ" includes head and body (Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23; Rev. 12:5) and the body is allotted to suffering, as well as the head, so that "all, who will live Godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution." 2 Tim. 3:12. We "fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ." Col. 1:24; 2 Cor. 1:5-6; Phil. 3:10; 2 Tim. 1:8; 2:12. Not only does the New Testament teach this, but nineteen hundred years of experience, through faggot, flame, stripes and ostracism, prove that suffering is inevitable to the Godly in this dispensation.

Hence we see that there is no place for the glory in this evil age (Gal. 1:4), and therefore it must follow in the promised Millennium.

REVELATION

Thus far, we have scarcely referred to the book of Revelation, because it is often asserted, by superficial scholars, that the doctrine of a Millennium has no foundation in any other part of Scripture, except in this book. The folly of such an assertion is readily seen. Why, as we have already stated, the doctrine of the Millennium was held by Jewish scholars, long before the book of Revelation was written. It was commonly taught in the Talmud that the Messianic Kingdom would last for one thousand years; and this was based entirely upon the Old Testament Scripture. And now, having shown that the doctrine rests on God's Holy Week, and is interwoven with the other great cardinal doctrines, throughout the whole of Scripture, let us come to this book of Revelation, of which it is said, "Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy and keep those things which are written therein." Rev. 1:3.

No other book in the Scriptures has such a blessing pronounced upon it.

Satan hates to have Christians read this book more than any other, because it so fully and plainly tells of his downfall and their triumph. It describes *how* God "shall bruise Satan under" our "feet shortly." Rom. 16:20.

In the very first chapter, we are told that Jesus Christ—the ruler of the kings of the earth—hath made us to be a kingdom and priests unto His God and Father. In the 5th chapter we are told that we shall reign *upon the earth.* This word earth (Gr. Gee) always means the physical earth, the land or ground.

Note this. The kingdom is not some imaginary, ethereal, "spiritual" (so-called) dominion, but a literal reign of righteous government *upon the earth.*

In the 7th chapter the twelve tribes of Israel are included. For these, Jesus has promised thrones to be occupied by each of His twelve apostles. Matt. 19:28.

In the 12th chapter is revealed The Christ, Jesus the head —caught up to God and His throne eighteen centuries ago, and the church—His body—to be caught up at the Rapture. Then shall be war in heavenfl Then shall Satan and his angels be cast out into the earth. Then shall the Heavens rejoice, but the earth shall wail because Satan is come down, having great wrath, knowing his time is short. He immediately begins his persecution of the woman, Israel, out of whom Christ-head (Jesus) and body (the church) has been taken.

We must remember that the Church was begun with a little band of Jews—the faithful remnant (Acts 1:14-15; 2:1-4; Rom. 9:27; 11:4), and we gentiles, are wild olive branches grafted in among them. Rom. 11:17. So that the Church is also out of the woman—Israel.

The 13th chapter reveals the mastery efforts of Satan to stamp out all worship of God from the earth and inaugurate the worship of himself. He will seize and control commercialism, so that no man can buy or sell unless he has the mark of the beast.

There will be only one trust then, and it will be world-wide. He will seize all political power, and bring forth his two great wild-beasts of Satanic dominion. He will seize apostate Christendom and use it for a little, until it becomes so corrupt that his secular powers tear it to pieces.

Then he will bring forth his antichrist and set up his image and kill all those who will not worship it. Note this carefully, for these are the tribulation saints, of whom we read in the 20th chapter.

The 17th chapter is a description of the great harlot, apostate Christendom.

The 18th chapter is a description of rebuilt, literal Babylon, which Satan will make his capital.

That the old city of Babylon is to be rebuilt is evident, because it has never been destroyed, in the sudden and over-

whelming manner which the Scriptures describe. See Isa. 13:19; Jer. 50:40; Rev. 18:21.

The 19th chapter describes the return of Jesus, with the Church, which will have been caught up to meet Him (1 Thes. 4:13-18), and the armies of heaven following Him. He smites the nations, the beasts, and the kings of the earth are overthrown and cast into the lake of fire. Then in logical order the 20th chapter gives us the climax—the binding of Satan himself and the Millennial reign of the saints, with Christ, for a thousand years.

Let us read this passage carefully, remembering that it is *Scripture, God's Holy Word.* Rev. 20:1-8:

1. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.

3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

5. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This *is* the first resurrection.

6. Blessed and holy *is* he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.

8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather

them together to battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea.

Six times repeated in this passage, we have the plain expression "Thousand years" (Latin Millennium) as the measure of the time during which Satan is bound and the saints reign. The doctrine of the Millenium is so plainly taught in this Scripture that "wayfaring men shall not err therein." Isa. 35:8.

We might consistently rest the whole argument here, for, in the face of such definite language, how can anyone have the temerity to claim that the *Scriptures* do not teach the doctrine of a Millenium?

Those who do so, usually proceed upon one of two methods. One is to attack the Apocalypse—this blessed book of Revelation—as not authentic, or as being uncanonical and uncreditable.

God have mercy upon such sacrilege.

The other method is a process of, so-called, *"spiritualizing"* interpretation, by which men substitute their own imaginary conceptions for the Word of God. It recklessly opens the way for all the vagaries of Swendenborgianism, or the havoc of destructive criticism.

Our modern destructive critics have hurled their chief efforts against the Apocalypse of Daniel in the Old Testament and the Apocalypse of John in the New Testament. These attacks are not new. Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, raised the question of the apostolic origin of the Apocalypse, and in the course of the fourth century it was removed from the sacred canon, "and thus," says a learned historian, "the troublesome foundation on which Chiliasm might have continued was gotten rid of."

For many centuries the Greek Church kept the Johannic Apocalypse out of its canon. But "the old Book" stood, and was finally restored late in the middle ages.

And it stands still, beloved, and will stand, when the "destructive critics," like the "vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth." (Jas. 4:14), have passed away.

It is the Word of God, "the Revelation of Jesus Christ,

which God gave Him, to show unto His servants." Based upon such apostolic foundation, the doctrine of the Millennium was received by the entire Apostolic Church.

The early fathers, Papius, Justin, Cerenthius, Irenaeus, Hippolitus, Tertullian and others all believed and taught it. Justin speaks of Chiliasm as a necessary part of complete orthodoxy.

But "the spirit of philosophical and theological speculation and reflection, which began to spread through the churches in the third and fourth centuries, did not know what to make of the old hopes of the future." A mighty conflict was developed, and Satan found agencies to undermine the faith of God's people in this blessed doctrine of the Millennium. Origin and his school, introduced the "spiritualizing" methods of interpreting escatology.

"Augustine, in the western church, who once believed in Chiliasm, changed with the downfall of the Roman empire, and was the first to teach that the Catholic Church, in its empirical form, was the Kingdom of Christ, that the Millennial Kingdom had commenced with the appearing of Christ, and was therefore an accomplished fact."*

We know the sad result, in the centuries of dark ages which followed.

But how much more grievous it is to find that men will advocate the same mistaken methods now. They tell us that Revelation is a symbolical book and therefore we cannot take its plain statements literally. They say that because the horns, lions and beasts are figurative, therefore the thousand years must be figurative and mean any indefinite time we choose.

Such reasoning is most fallacious and destroys all foundation for conveying definite ideas by *any* language.

As well might we call Jesus Christ a mere figure, because he is represented by a "shoot," a "branch," "the morning star," the "sun," or a "Lamb." No portion of the Bible is more strongly figurative than the first six chapters of Zechariah. But who would be so foolish as to claim that

*A. Hilliard Atteridge in Encyclopedia Brittanica.

Zerubbabel, Judah and Jerusalem were figurative because they are mentioned therein?

But, says the objector, this is the only place in Scripture where the thousand years is mentioned. We are surprised that any student should make such a statement. Can they be willingly ignorant of Psa. 90, and 2 Pet. 3:8? But suppose it was the only place. Is not that enough, if it is the Word of God?

The most important event in all human history is the incarnation—the hypostatic union of the Divine and the human, in our Lord Jesus. And yet the plain prophecy of His birth without a human father, rested for seven centuries upon the single passage in Isa. 7:14.

Likewise a single passage told of His birth at Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), His entry into Jerusalem on a colt (Zech. 9:9), and many other events, foretold by a single prophecy, have all come to pass. Just so surely shall this sixfold prophecy of the thousand years be fulfilled, for *our God* hath spoken it.

Some have stumbled over the word souls, as though only spirits were meant, forgetting, or overlooking, the fact that the same word, *psukee,* is used to designate persons or individuals. See Acts 2:41; 7:14; 27:37; 1 Cor. 15:45, etc.

Again, it is objected that only the martyrs are spoken of in this passage.

But this is a mistake. Read the first part of verse four again: "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and Judgment was given unto them."

Nothing is said here about the resurrection of these. And why not? Because they had been raised long before, at the Rapture of the church. 1 Thes. 4:13-18; Rev. 12:5.

They had escaped the great tribulation. Lu. 21:36; Rev. 3:10. They had been married to the Lord and came with Him to overthrow Satan and his empire. Rev. 19:5, 14. And now they sit upon the thrones promised in Mat. 19:28; Lu. 22:30, and Judgment is given into their hands. See also Dan. 7:9-28. And who are these martyrs spoken of in the remainder of the verse? Why! they are the tribulation

saints, who will be slain under the reign of antichrist. Rev. 13. See how plainly they are described: "And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had" (note it carefully and compare with Rev. 13) "not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and *they* lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."

"This is the first resurrection," that is, the completion of the first resurrection.

Christ the first fruits.

Then the great ingathering at the Rapture.

And now, these tribulation saints, as the gleanings, completes the first resurrection.

"And the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years are finished."

Men may interpose idle questions and conundrums; they may try to mislead us with flippant remarks and even ridicule: they may bombard this stronghold with subtle arguments and man-made conclusions: all to their own sorrow. But let *us* reverence the Word of God and heed the promise He gives us. "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word." Isa. 66:2.

Let us hold sacred and precious this book of Revelation, which begins and closes with a special assurance of blessing to those who keep the words of its wonderful prophecy.

This Scriptural doctrine of the Millenium cannot be shaken. Its root is in the *Sabbath* of Genesis; and its fruit is in the Thousand-year kingdom of Revelation. It shines throughout the Word of God as a glorious hope for the nations.

Shine on, O blessed Revelation of God, and the Lord stamp upon our hearts the warning that, "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life."

THE PROPHETS

And now, let us reiterate the fact that this doctrine of the Millennium is taught all through the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation. We have seen that it is God's great Millennial *Sabbath;* that it is his *Seventh* aion; that it is inwrought into the great doctrine of the Resurrection, so that those who rise *from* the dead are separated by a *thousand years from* those who *stand* before the great white throne. That it is intertwined with all the teaching concerning the Kingdom, as the period when Israel, according to the Scripture, shall repossess their land and enjoy the restored Theocracy.

In short, Scripture prophecy is a progressive revelation of the coming Messianic Kingdom.

The seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15) is limited to Noah (Gen. 5:29), to Abraham (Gen. 12:3), to Isaac (Gen. 17:19), to Jacob (Gen. 27:33), to the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:8-10), to David's House (2 Sam. 7:8-16), to a virgin of whom the Son, Immanuel, should be born (Isa. 7:14), who should have the throne of His father David and rule over the house of Jacob for *the aions* (forever). Lu. 1:32-33.

The earlier prophets seem to have seen but one end of Gentile times and then the Messianic Kingdom.

For instance, Moses in Lev. 26 tells of the punishments upon Israel and the desolations of their land for the great period of *Seven Times* and then Israel's repentance and God's remembrance of His covenant and the Land.

In Deut. 31 and 32 Moses again depicts the rebellion of Israel and what shall befall them in the *latter days.* (31:29; 32:20, 29.)

He speaks of death and resurrection (32:39), of Judgment (V. 41) and the overthrow of the enemy (V. 42), and then the rejoicing of the *Nations* and His *people,* when He will be merciful unto His land and His people. (V. 43.)

Note, that here are the same (eschata) last things, to-wit, resurrection, Judgment and overthrow of the enemy (Satan), preceding the *rejoicing,* as are given by John in Revelation, which precede the Millennium.

This is more distinctly set forth 800 years later by the Holy Spirit, through the prophet Isaiah. In chapter 24 he gives a picture of the awful judgments that shall come upon the earth, so that it "shall reel to and fro like a drunkard" (verse 20), and in *that day* "the Lord shall punish the host of high ones, on high" (verse 21), that is, Satan and his hosts (see Eph. 6:12; Rev. 12 and 19), as well as the Kings on the earth. And they shall be *shut up* in prison *many days* (verse 22). This *many days* corresponds to the *thousand years* of Rev. 20. The same *last things* precede it; and the same reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem. follows it (verse 23), when the light, of the moon and the sun, shall not be needed for the Lord Himself shall be the light thereof. Rev. 21:24.

About 200 years later, in the prophecy of the *Seventy Sevens* (weeks) we get a glimpse of two ends. It is 69 weeks—483 years—to the coming of the Messiah who should be "cut off" and the city destroyed (Dan. 9:26), which brings the first end. Then follow desolations unto another end. Jerusalem is to be trodden down until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. Lu. 21:24. Then comes a covenant (Antichrist with Israel) for one week and then the overthrow of the desolator. From Dan. 2:44 and 7:14, 26, 27, we know that the Messianic Kingdom follows.

These two ends, of the aions, are shown, even more clearly, 150 years later, by the prophet Zechariah. The first is when the Messiah comes, just and lowly, riding "upon a colt" (Ch. 9:9), and the second, when He comes to stand upon the Mount of Olives causing it to cleave asunder. Ch. 14:4.

The first time He is wounded in the house of His friends (Ch. 13:6) and the second time, they look upon Him "whom they have pierced." Ch. 12:10.

At the first end, the chariot is cut off from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem, and the Messiah turns to speak

peace to the heathen. Ch. 9:10. At the second end, Jerusalem is again destroyed, the Lord God comes with all His saints (14:2-5) and becomes King over all the earth. (14:9.) Great changes occur in the land and Jerusalem is safely inhabited (verses 10-11) and there shall be no more utter destruction. All nations shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts and to keep the feast of tabernacles, and even on the bells of the horses (verses 16, 20) shall be

"HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD."

These two ends, of the two aions, Jewish and Christian, were a puzzle to the prophets themselves. They were like the Holy Spirits' utterances of a suffering Messiah and of a King reigning in world wide glory and majesty. They could not reconcile them. Peter tells us that they "searched diligently"—"searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ—did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." 1 Pet. 1:11.

It is just so to-day. An orthodox Jew, who still looks for the coming of his Messiah, cannot explain how He can come meek and lowly riding on a colt (Zech. 9:9), and also in the clouds of heaven. Dan. 7:13. He does not understand that He must come twice. One of the best arguments to convince the Jew that Jesus is the Messiah is to show him, that, as He has come once on a colt (Mat. 21:1-11), so, according to His promise (John 14:3), will He come again in the clouds of heaven. Mat. 26:64.

We point the Jew to the literal fulfillment of prophecy, by Jesus at His first coming, as a conclusive evidence that He is the Messiah:

Born of a Virgin. Isa. 7:14.
At Bethlehem. Micah 5:2.
Called out of Egypt. Hosea 11:1.
Sold for thirty pieces of silver. Zec. 11:12.
Spit on and scourged. Isa. 50:6.
Not a bone broken. Psa. 34:20.

Hands and feet pierced, Psa. 22:16, and many others.

How stultifying for us to deny the literal fulfillment of the multitude of passages, concerning His coming again, especially those which tell us that He shall have the Throne of David (Isa. 9:6-7; Lu. 1:32), that Israel shall be restored, Zion built up (Psa. 102:16), the apostles sit on twelve thrones, over the twelve tribes of Israel (Mat. 19:28) that His throne shall be in Jerusalem (Jer. 3:17), that He shall rule all nations (Psa. 2:8-9; Rev. 2:27), and the kingdoms of *this world* become His kingdom (Zec. 9:10; Rev. 11:15), that God will make an end of all the nations, but He will not make an end of Israel. Jer. 46:28.

In that wonderful passage in the prophet Micah (Ch. 4), concerning the *last days* and mountain of the Lord's House being established; and the people flowing unto it: and the law going forth of Zion and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem; we read (verses 6 and 7) of the restoration of Israel and "the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth forever.

Just here, let us call special attention to the expression *"In that day,"* Isa. 24:21. It is used about fifty times by this prince of prophets, as also by many of the other prophets. See Isa. 2:11 and the references. "In that day" evidently means the thousand-year day. It is *"the day of the Lord."* Isa. 2:12. Read carefully the context of the passages where it occurs, especially Isa., Chs. 2:4; 11; 12; 24; 25:26; 27; 28; 29; 30; 52, etc., and see how the events agree with the judgment, the overthrow of the adversary; and the reign of Christ and His saints as described in Rev. 19 and 20. Look also at the many passages which speak of the "Great Day," the "Day of Judgment," "Day of the Lord."

Oh! how can anyone read the Word of God and not see and accept its plain statement of this great dispensational truth of the thousand-year Messianic Kingdom?

SPIRITUALIZING INTERPRETATION

A method of so-called "spiritualizing interpretation" is often resorted to in order to eliminate from the Scripture teaching of the Kingdom, the King, the throne, the Jews and all literal earthly government of the race of mankind.

Texts of Scripture are quoted such as, "The Kingdom of God is within you," and "The Kingdom of God cometh not with observation" (Lu. 17:20-21), and upon these imperfect translations of the original texts, the superficial advocate proceeds to construct a kingdom after his own fancy, with subjects and territory ranging all the way from simply the Christian Church to the universe.

This he does in blind contravention of hundreds of texts, and the whole sweep of prophecy, which declares and assures, upon the oath of God Himself (Gen. 22:17; Jer. 31:35-49), the restoration of Israel and a literal reign of the saints upon the earth. Rev. 5:10; Dan. 7:27; Amos 9:11-15.

Such reasoning and conclusions are as forceful as the colored preachers' argument, who said he could prove that Jesus was a little man, *very small,* and that he could prove it from the Bible. When the text was demanded, he replied, with evident assurance: "Doesn't it say, *'Lo, I am'?"*

A moment's reflection will show the fallacy of using those texts, in Luke, to support the chimera of such a so-called "spiritual kingdom."

Did Jesus tell those wicked Pharasees that the Kingdom of God was *within* them? No, indeed! The correct translation is *"among* you," and that was literally true. The King was there. His disciples were there and He was ready to establish the Kingdom, had they been willing to receive Him. But, seeing they rejected Him, the Kingdom became like a nobleman who went into a far country to receive a kingdom and return. Luke 19:12.

Again, "not with observation" is literally "not with scrupulous watching." They would not need a microscope to find it, for it would appear like the shining of the lightning in heaven. Lu. 17:24.

Romans 14:17 is just as illogically quoted. For, while "the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink," it is definitely stated that we shall eat and drink in the Kingdom of God. Matt. 26:29; Mar. 14:25.

Of a similar character are the arguments built upon the parables, given to illustrate the *mysteries* of the Kingdom. Matt. 13:11. Our Lord says there *are* mysteries of the Kingdom. We live in an age (aion) of mysteries, an evil age. Gal. 1:4. There is the mystery of Godliness (1 Tim. 3:16); the mystery of iniquity (2 Thes. 2:7), the mystery of Christ (Eph. 3:4); the mystery of the Church (Eph. 5:32); the mystery of the Gospel (Eph. 6:19; Col. 1:26); the mystery of the blindness of Israel (Rom. 11:25); and the mystery of God. Rev. 10:7.

And though these mysteries are now made known, instead of being hid (Col. 1:26), yet they are still mysterious, "in which are some things hard to be understood" (2 Pet. 3:16), and we see them as "in a riddle." 1 Cor. 13:12, margin.

But some teachers profess to understand all about the Kingdom, and they tell us that the *leaven* (Matt. 13:33) represents the spread of righteousness in the world, instead of corruption, in the Church. In the numerous other passages where it is used it always represents corruption. See Matt. 16:6-12; Gal. 5:9. They tell us that the mustard tree (Matt. 13:32) shelters the righteous, whereas the birds of the air, which lodge in it, are likened to Satan himself, catching away the Words from the hearts of men. See Luke 8:5, 12. Such reasoning and methods of interpretation are equal to the sophistry of the Jewish contentions against the Messianic claims of Jesus our Lord.

God forbid that we should allow them to rob us of the glorious hope of the Kingdom, stated in plain and simple language, like the *Thousand Years* of Revelation Twenty.

LITERAL FULFILLMENT

The Bible is a peerless book, especially on the subject of prophecy. The Koran, the Vedas, the writings of Confucius, and the books of other great religions, express many lofty sentiments, and many excellent rules for human conduct. Even the "Golden Rule" was stated negatively by Confucius. But the Bible surpasses them all, containing the revelations of the true God and reaching that pinnacle of ethics, expressed in the simple words, "Love your enemies."

Mohammedans, Hindoos and Confucianists will all admit one feature of superiority in our Bible, and that is prophecy. Their sacred books can depict the state of "Nirvana," "the Western Paradise" and other blessings in heaven. This is easy, for no one can return from an investigation, to affirm or deny.

But when it comes to prophecy, concerning events upon the earth, events to be fulfilled in the history of nations, and the experiences of man in this life, they are all silent. But our Bible, the Word of God, triumphantly sets forth its supernatural origin, by definite and specific prophecies, concerning the affairs of this life.

We have already referred to several Messianic prophecies fulfilled in the first coming of our Lord. See pages 35, 39.

Over 500 years before the event, a prophet of Israel had set the price upon the Messiah at *"thirty pieces of silver,"* and "cast them to the potter." Zech. 11:12, 13. Who could have been more desirous to have prevented this from becoming an evidence, to the claims of Jesus to be their Messiah, than the Chief Priests of the Jews? And yet, in their blind haste and madness, they actually covenanted with Judas for those exact 30 pieces of silver, and when Judas returned the money, they doubled the evidence by finishing

the fulfillment in buying the *"potters'"* field. Matt. 26:15; 27:7. Again, those coarse and brutal Roman soldiers, utterly indifferent to anything except their own personal advantage, divided his garments among them and cast lots for his vesture, the seamless coat, literally fulfilling the words of the Psalmist, uttered a thousand years before. Psa. 22:18. It was the duty of these same soldiers to break the legs of the criminals whom they crucified; and they did so to the two thieves. But, behold! when they came to Jesus, because He was already dead, they broke not His legs. Who but God could have foreseen such unexpected action and put into the mouth of the Psalmist, a thousand years before, those memorable words, "He keepeth all His bones, not one of them is broken." Psa. 34:20.

See also the "smiting" and the "spitting," which was to be on the "cheek" and in the "face," foretold by Isaiah, over seven centuries before it occurred.

There are twenty-five detail facts concerning the trial and crucifixion of Jesus recorded by the prophets from 500 to 1,000 years previously, which were all literally and exactly fulfilled on that one eventful day in Jerusalem.

How can one read these without "trembling before the WORD OF GOD?"

Cyrus, the king of Persia, was called by name, by the prophet Isaiah (Ch. 44:28; 45:1) nearly two centuries before he was born. Instead of accepting this as a marvelous evidence of the *literal* fulfillment of prophecy, the so-called "higher critics" endeavor to twist it into an argument for bisecting the prophet. We believe that God is pleased with all reverent, critical study of His Word, but we pity those who will surely meet His Judgment for their arrogant and presumptuous "destructive criticism."

This marvelous Bible, with its sixty-six books, written by forty-two authors, in such a perfect unity, as one book, that we are compelled to revere it, as the product of one controlling mind, the Holy Spirit of God, this Wonderful Word, is full of prophecies, similarly exact, about the people of Israel, whose very existence, scattered over the world

to-day, is a living witness to the literal fulfillment of its prophetic utterances.

And there are scores of other prophecies concerning the nations, cities, governments and even commercialism. We are familiar with the fulfillment of many of these in the history of Assyria, Babylon, Egypt, etc., but we are apt to overlook those which pertain to our own times. Zephaniah 2:1-2 is being fulfilled in the present Zionist movement, in which the Jews are making a purely secular effort to regain Palestine. "Gather yourselves," says the Almighty, as though He stepped aside and let them exhibit the foolishness and calamitous results of their purely national movement. Dr. Herzel, their leader, is reported to have said, at the first congress in Basle, in 1897, "We must buy our way back to Palestine, salvation is to be by money." And one of the first speakers at that same congress said of the Sultan, "If his majesty will now receive us, we will accept him as our Messiah." It is a godless movement and the prophet tells us that it will bring upon them the "day of Jehovah's anger." Zeph. 2:2.

Over thirty-eight centuries ago God said to Abraham, "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee" (Gen. 12:3), and this special divine protection was repeated to Israel, Abraham's seed. Gen. 27:29; Ex. 23:22; Nu. 24:9.

The *literal* fulfillment of this has been demonstrated in the history of the nations, with whom Israel has come in contact. We are inclined to regard this as all past and overlook its verification in our day. The most fearful calamity which the Jews have suffered, since the destruction of Jerusalem, was their expulsion from Spain, in 1492. Hundreds of thousands were driven out, under the edict of Ferdinand and Isabella, spurred on by Torquemada, that monster of the inquisition. A recitation of the cruelties they suffered will make the ear tingle and melt the hardest heart.

But what of Spain? From her exalted position, with a prospect of being the first nation of Europe, she has gone down and down, losing all her South American colonies, and

other possessions, until Admiral Dewey one May morning shot off what there was left, and proud Spain is writhing upon her own peninsula, almost in the throes of anarchy. And what of Russia—mighty Russia—whose anti-Semitic hand has been so ruthlessly turned upon the congested millions of Jews in her borders? Are not her disasters and fatalities in the present war (1904) with little Japan another evidence that the God of Israel will curse them who persecute His ancient people?

If one wishes to see the prophetic picture of Russia's final overthrow, let him read carefully the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel, in the revised version. The very names of the central divisions of the empire are given. Rosh, Mesheck and Tubal, *i. e.,* Russia, Moscow and Tobolsk. It is a remarkable picture of the mighty hordes of the *north,* which, *in the last days,* shall sweep down upon regathered and defenseless Israel, to meet an unprecedented destruction. Gomer (Germany) and all his bands are to be with them. This gives special significance to the present friendliness of Germany for Russia. O, Lands of the North, Beware! God Himself will fulfill His Word and protect His people.

"Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and His Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts: I am the first and the last; and besides me there is no God. And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me since I established the *ancient people?* and the things that are coming, and that shall come to pass, let them declare. Fear ye not, neither be afraid; have I not declared unto thee of old, and showed it? and we are my witness. Is there a God beside me?" Isa. 44: 6-8.

Beloved! will not such a God *literally fulfill* those blessed THOUSAND YEARS in the twentieth chapter of Revelation?

QUESTIONS

Many questions arise about the characteristics of the Millennium, which are much more easily asked than answered. Questions in regard to the manner of life, food, apparel, abode, etc., of the raised and changed believers; and their relation to restored Israel, and the ordinary inhabitants of the earth.

Questions in regard to the methods of government and how the laws of the kingdom will be enforced.

Questions as to the longevity and consequent increase of population and fruitfulness of the earth.

Questions as to dates, "times and seasons," especially in regard to the definite time, of the six days, equal 6,000 years, to the beginning of the Millennium.

These, and many others, are promptly, and often boastfully asked, by opponents of the doctrine of the Millennium. They also cite passages of Scripture, some of which are, and others which appear to be, difficult to explain in harmony with the doctrine. Such for instance as Matt. 16:28. "There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in His Kingdom."

Matt. 24:34, "This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled."

They demand of us answers to their curious questions; and explanations of all the difficult passages, before they can accept this Scripturally founded doctrine of a Millennium.

This is both unfair and unreasonable. No man has yet been able to satisfactorily explain all the symbols, mysteries and wonders of the book of Revelation. But is that any reason for our rejecting its plain statements, and to destroy the hope and comfort which even its most enigmatical symbols give to the patient, toiling and often persecuted heavenward pilgrim?

As well might we justify the Jews in rejecting Jesus, because of the enigmas of Old Testament Messianic prophecy.

We accept and present the overwhelming Scripture proof of the Millennium, but we deny that there can be any just burden of proof on us to explain all the detail of such a vast and far-reaching subject.

Much can be understood now that could not, in the days of Israel's prophets. This is clear from 1 Pet. 1:10-12. Revelation has been progressive and so has interpretation. This has been peculiarly true in the past four hundred years. Every century since the Reformation has increased our understanding of prophecy. The present Zionist movement among the Jews is like the handwriting upon the wall, to those who will heed the "signs of the times." Lu. 21:25-28, and Ezek. 37:1-14.

Our God will make all to be clear in due time. All He asks of us is implicit trust and confidence in HIS WORD. "We walk by faith." Fulfilled prophecy stimulates us to expectant confidence as to the unfulfilled. So, while we lament, as frivolous, the queries of the curious, and reject, as unreasonable, the detail demands of the chatechist, we do recognize, as consistent and important, the propriety of reverent inquiry on the part of those who "tremble at the Word of God." Isa. 66:2.

It is often asserted that expositors of prophecy do not agree and therefore the whole subject should be shelved. How unreasonable! Such a method would shelve every doctrine of Scripture. The history of the church records a continuous, ecclesiastical battle, and that upon doctrines, like repentance, faith and works, baptism, foreordination, regeneration and sanctification, which pertain to our every-day life and experiences.

Then why shall we demand exact agreement upon a subject which sweeps throughout all the future?

The inconsistency of such opponents is glaringly emphasized by the total disagreement among themselves.

Agnostics, skeptics and infidels present us with a perfect hotch-potch of man-made theories and fanciful conclusions.

Post-millennialists and anti-millennialists are equally divergent in their so-called "*spiritualizing*" interpretations of prophecy. One who boldly asserts what the plainest Millennial text of Scripture does *not* mean, is frank to admit that he *does not know* what it does mean, and yet he says he knows "just as much about it as anyone else does." A convenient mixture, this, of negative positivism with positive negativity.

It is not surprising that such an one should be, as he says, "neither *pre* nor *post* but anti." He fails to agree with either of the two great bodies of prophetic students, Premillennialists or Postmillennialists. He is *sui-generis* in prophetic study.

Prophecy is like the view of a mighty landscape. Premillennialists are remarkably agreed upon the mountain peaks of the outlook, such as, the Return of our Lord, the Resurrection, the overthrow of Satan and his kingdom, the gathering of Israel, and the Millennial Kingdom. You will find no *destructive criticis* among them. They venerate the Word of God and give it the most patient and *reverent critical* study. They recognize and affirm that we know nothing of the future, except as revealed in Scripture prophecy, and that only the Holy Spirit Himself can enable us to rightly interpret it. John 16:13.

Oh! how small we all are in the sight of Him, who hath given us His Wonderful Word. Isa. 40:15-17.

If the following, presented, we trust, in "humility and a contrite spirit" (Isa. 66:2) shall be of instruction, or comfort, to any who fear the Lord and think upon His name, the writer will rejoice.

EXPLANATIONS

"This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled." Matt. 24:34.

There are two explanations of this. One that "generation" designates the whole nation of Israel throughout their entire history. See Psa. 22:30. "A seed shall serve Him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation;" also Matt. 23:36. "All these things shall come upon this generation," and verse 33, "Ye generation of vipers." "All these things" evidently cover and include the entire preaching of the Gospel to Israel (see verse 34); the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion and regathering of Israel. See verses 38 and 39. So that the pronoun "ye" and "your" designates the whole body corporate of Israel. Israel shall not pass away until all be fulfilled.

Another explanation is that the "ye" of Ch. 24 designates the whole body corporate of the church. Verses 1, 2, 33, etc. A generation was to come which would "see these things begin to come to pass." Lu. 21:28. Mark is specific about "those days" (13:24) and "then" (v. 26 and 27) and "when" (v. 28, 29), indicating that the "generation" which should specifically see "the abomination of desolation (v. 14) would see all these things come to pass, for the Lord would "shorten the days" (v. 20) and make "a short work * * * upon the earth" (Rom. 9:28), when He shall "rise up to the prey." Zeph. 3:8.

Surely either of these explanations is sufficient to make this text harmonize with the great body of Scripture truth concerning the Millennium.

"There be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom." (Matt. 16:28.) Or, "kingdom of God come with power" (Mar. 9:1); or, "kingdom of God" (Lu. 9:27).

The explanation of these texts is clear and simple. Why,

within eight days thereafter the three favored disciples witnessed the transfiguration.

The *power* and *glory* of Jesus shone forth in overwhelming brightness. Moses and Elias, representatives of the Law, the Prophets and the holy dead, were there, the Disciples representing poor, blind Israel were there, Heaven was opened and God the Father shone out of the (shekinah) cloud; and His own voice established the divinity and authority of our Lord. Peter afterward bore testimony to it, as a manifestation of the honor, glory, power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Pet. 1:16-18.

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man." Mark 13:32, 33; Matt. 24:42; 25:13; Lu. 12:40.

A reference to the diagram will quickly make this clear. The Rapture, when the church is caught away to meet the Lord, in the air, may occur at any moment. We have *no date* for it. We are to live with "our loins girded" and our "lights burning" like unto men that wait for their Lord. Lu. 12:35-36. But the Revelation, when the church shall return to the earth, with our Lord, is a subsequent event and pertains especially to Israel and the nations.

Mark well, that this is not two comings, but only two stages or phases to the one coming. At the first stage the Lord pauses in the air, and, like a mighty magnet, draws the waiting ones up unto Himself. 1 Thes. 4:13-18. The meeting, the presentation of the bride (Eph. 5:27) and the marriage (Rev. 19:7) takes a period of time, the length of which is not known. It may be seven years, the last week of Dan. 9, or forty years, like the wanderings of Israel in the wilderness, or even more. We know not the time.

So we see how clearly the texts point to the uncertain time of our Rapture. May the Lord increase our watchfulness.

"My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36.

"The kingdom of God is within (among) you." Lu. 17:21.

"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink." Rom. 14:17.

"Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." 1 Cor. 15:50.

For remarks on these texts see page 41.

"The doctrine makes the gospel a failure."

"It disparages the work of the Holy Spirit.' '

"The gospel has not been preached in all the world."

For refutation of these, and other similar assertions, space compels us to refer the reader to the books "Jesus Is Coming" and "Satan, His Kingdom and Its Overthrow," published by F. H. Revell & Co., Chicago and New York.

Briefly, we may state here, that the Holy Spirit came, according to promise, to "reprove the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment," and, by His regenerating and sanctifying power, to win and prepare a bride (the church) for the Lord. John 16:8, etc. When He, as the hinderer of Satan, is taken away (2 Thes. 2:7) He will, quickly, like Abraham's servant (Gen. 24), catch away the church to meet the Lord in the air.

No one will call the gospel a failure, when we see the church, the body of the Lord, completed and glorified as a Holy Temple (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16) built for the habitation of God in the Spirit. Eph. 2:20-22, R. V. We shall then *all* understand why the Holy Spirit himself put that last hastening prayer into the mouth of the beloved John: "AMEN; COME, LORD JESUS." Rev. 22:20.

The gospel has already been preached in nearly all the world (oikoumene, habitable earth). Matt. 24:14.

Only God can decide as to when the witness is complete.

While the church remains, she should make the evangelization of the world the one work given her to do. It is simple obedience to the last command of the Master. Thank God! the task is nearly completed. Only Tibet, Afghanistan and the Soudan remain untouched, and even these have some testimony, and their closed doors are unlatching.

But, it may be that the witness will be finished, after the church is caught away, by the Tribulation saints and the two witnesses (Rev. 11:3; 13:15; 20:4), and "the angel flying in the midst of heaven having the everlasting gospel

to preach * * * to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. Rev. 14:6.

"TIMES AND SEASONS"

And now we take up the delicate subject of dates. Certainly there are prophetic dates, "times and seasons," in Scripture, and they all pertain to Israel.

Great disrepute has been brought upon the "blessed hope" of our Lords' return by setting dates for it.

As we have before emphasized, the church has no date for the coming of our Lord. We only know that the Rapture precedes the Revelation. Whatever events indicate the appoach of the latter, are signs to us that the Rapture is nearer. And this is assured to us. We are "to see the day approaching." Heb. 10:25. See, also, 1 Thes. 5:1-6; Lu. 21:28. Even the oncoming apostasy is to stimulate us to watchfulness. 2 Thes. 2:3, 15; Lu. 18:8.

But Israel's history is all pre-written and their "times" are measured.

God told Abraham that his seed should be strangers and afflicted 400 years. Gen. 15:13. There was 430 years from the covenant to the exodus (see Gal. 3:17), 400 of which was affliction (see Acts 7:6), and the deliverance was on the "self-same day." Ex. 12:40.

Moses then gave them the great period of *seven times.* Lev. 26. Four times over he designates a punishment for *seven times.* Verses 18, 21, 24, 28.

From a comparison of the several passages, "A time, times and a half" (Dan. 7:25; 12:7), "forty and two months" (Rev. 11:2; 13:5), "a thousand two hundred and sixty days" (Rev. 11:3; 12:6 and 14), we know that a time is 360 days, that is, a Jewish year. See Gen. 7:11, 24; 8:3, 4. Five months equal 150 days, therefore 12 months equal 360 days. A time, times and a half equal 360+720+180 equal 1,260. The Hebrew Mohgehd, a time, signifies the interval from a festival to its recurrence, that is, a year.

There are two views with reference to the fulfillment of these prophetic periods. The futurist, which construes them literally, as three and one-half years, to be fulfilled in the coming last week (Dan. 9) of Israel's history.

The historical view regards them as symbolical periods, which are being fulfilled, on the basis of "a day for a year."

Some hold both views, that is, a literal fulfillment in the future, during Israel's great tribulation, under antichrist, and a symbolical fulfillment on the year-day basis, as though the image of antichrist (Rev. 13:14, 15) cast his shadow backward over Israel's pathway.

These may be briefly explained as follows:

Futurists make no use of the "seven times" (of Lev. 26), but they do agree with historists, that the "seventy weeks" (of Dan. 9) cover 490 years of Israel's history .

The Hebrew term is seventy *sevens.* Futurists hold that these *sevens* stand for sevens of years and are therefore literally, 70×7 equal 490 years.

Historists hold that they stand for *sevens* of days, the ordinary week, and that they therefore are interpreted on the basis of "a day for a year."

Literally, the *"sevens"* stand for either *days* or *years,* but days is by far the most commonly understood. See Gen. 29:27, 28; Ex. 34:22; Nu. 28; 26; Deut. 16:9, 10, 16; 2 Chr. 8:13; Jer. 5:24, where the same word is used. In Ezek. 45:21 and Dan. 10:2, 3, days are added, i. e., *weeks* days, in the original.

The historists also base their year-day interpretation on the Scripture statements, that with God a *day* is "as a thousand years" (2 Pet. 3:8), while with Israel a *day* stands for a year. Nu. 14:34; Ezek. 4:1-6.

THE SEVENTY WEEKS

These were to begin "from the going forth of the commandment to *restore* and to *build* Jerusalem." Dan. 9:25.

Four different decrees were issued:

1. By Cyrus, B. C., 536, which was only "to build the house"—temple. Ezra 1:1-5.

2. By Darius, B. C., 519, to continue the building of "the house." Ezra 6:1-12.

3. By Artaxerxes, B. C. 457. Ezra 7. At first sight this also seems to be only for "the house," but note that Ezra is to do whatever shall seem good to him (Ezra 7:18), and in his prayer (Ch. 9:9) he specially mentions the "wall" in Judah and Jerusalem.

This would indicate that the building of the city was included in the King's decree.

4. "Letters" were given to Nehemiah by Artaxerxes, B. C. 446, that he might go and "build" the city. Neh. 2:5-8. These letters seem to be merely authority to Nehemiah to carry out the degree of B. C. 457, and not a formal issue of a new decree. Beginning with this date, 457 B. C., the 69 weeks,—69×7 equal 483 years,—run to A. D. 26, when Jesus, who was born B. C. 4, was in His thirtieth year, or accurately, to His baptism, when He was "anointed" by the Holy Spirit, and announced by God to be His Son. Matt. 3:13-17.

This remarkably literal fulfillment of the prophecy ought to have convinced the Jews that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

After the 69 weeks, Messiah (the anointed) was to be "cut off" (Dan. 9:26), and then the city was to be destroyed and war was to continue "*to the end.*"

This is held to cover the whole Christian dispensation, during which the Jews are scattered throughout the world. It

is the same as the "many days" of Dan. 11:33. See this "time of the end," Ch. 11:35, 40; 8:17, 19.

Then comes the seventieth week, or last seven years. In this, a covenant is made between Israel and the antichrist. It is not the covenant with Christ (Isa. 42:6; 55:3) for it is made with one who comes "upon the wing of abominations." Dan. 9:27, R. V.

It is called by Isaiah a "covenant with death" and an "agreement with Sheol." Isa. 28:18.

In the midst of the week, antichrist will take away the sacrifice and oblation (Dan. 9:27), and bring upon Israel their unparalleled time of trouble. See Dan. 12:1; Jer. with His church.
30:6-7; Matt. 24:21.

From this they are delivered by the return of the Lord

This last half of the seventieth week, three and one-half years, is the time of the fulfillment, according to the futurists, of the "time, times and a half," "forty and two months" and "thousand two hundred and three score days;" that is, each measuring 1,260 literal days.

As for the Historical interpretation of the fulfillment of the several periods to wit: the "seven times" (Lev. 26), the 1,260, 1,290, 1,335 and 2,300 days of Dan. and Rev., it is only necessary here to say, that they all terminate within the limit of the six thousand years.

These six thousand years measure from Anno Mundi, the year of the world, so called.

It is really from the year of Adam, that is, 130 years before the birth of Seth. Gen. 5:3.

According to accepted chronology, we are already in the last century of these six thousand years.

There is much uncertainty as to the true Adamic date. Some hold that a score or more of years should be added to the ordinary, Bishop Usher, date of 4004 B. C. If so, the expiration of the 6,000 years is that much nearer accomplished.

And now, let us again emphasize our previous statement, that we have no date for the Rapture. All dates pertain to

Israel's history. We would not be at all dogmatic in regard to them. On the contrary, we would commend that they be studied with great caution, and especially as to assigning the events which they may designate.

But we do believe they are sufficiently significant, in the light of Isa. 42:9 and Lu. 21:28, to stimulate us to great hopefulness and constant watchfulness, for "Now is our Salvation (much) nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent; the day is at hand." Rom. 13:11, 12.

There are many Scriptural signs corroborative of this, such as:

1. *The prevalence of Travel and Knowledge.* Dan. 12:4.
2. *Perilous Times.* 2 Tim. 3:1.
3. *Spiritualism.* 1 Tim. 4:1.
4. *Apostasy.* 2 Thes. 2:3.
5: *World-wide Evangelism.* Matt. 24:14.
6. *Rich Men.* Jas. 5:1-8.
7. *The Arbitration Tribunal.* 1 Thes. 5:3. And especially.
8. *Zionism.* The Reviving of Israel. Lu. 21:28-31.

God hath given us these, that we may be stimulated to "watch and be sober." 1 Thes. 5:6. One would be significant, but, when so many stand together in this our day, how important that we heed the warning.

THE PASTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

There is a solemn responsibility laid upon the ministry of the church, regarding the subject of our Lord's return, the Millennium and kindred dispensational truths, which occupy so large a portion of the Bible. God by His Holy Spirit hath commanded them to "speak" of "these things" (Tit. 2:15), "wherefore comfort (exhort) one another with these words." 1 Thes. 4:18; 5:11.

But, strange to say, these subjects are almost entirely ignored. I have taken an expression in congregations, large and small, in all parts of our land, asking how many had ever heard a single sermon on the subject of our Lord's return, and I have been astonished to find that usually less than one-fifth could respond in the affirmative. A Methodist minister, in Florida, said he had never heard but five sermons on the subject, and he said he preached them all himself.

Now, as a result of this indifference to, or intentional elimination of, the subject, some irresponsible enthusiast comes along, preaching these truths. The people like to hear them and they flock to his services. Then he tucks on his tangents of soul sleeping, annihilation, restoration, time setting and other unscriptural adjuncts, by which he leads the people off into all sorts of fanatical vagaries, developing into Princism, Millerism, Dowieism, Mormonism and the like.

Oh, brethren in the ministry! heed the warning. *You are responsible* for these things. If you would conservatively preach these truths, with a frequency and emphasis proportional to their importance in the Scriptures, you could save the people from these tangents and fanaticisms, which are flooding the land. It is idle to taboo these subjects. They are part of the Word of God, the *"meat"* which is to be given "in due season." Matt. 24:25.

Preach them. Preach the Word. Preach these things. Rightly divide the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15). Give "the meat in due season" and receive the promised reward: "Blessed is that servant, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find so doing." Lu. 12:43.

——— 1918 ———

And now in this new edition, after fourteen years of the world's history, culminating in the present, unprecedented tragic conditions, let me again implore you, Oh, my Brethren in the Ministry, to heed the foregoing admonition.

God's rebuke of the nations Isaiah 17:12-14; the dashing in pieces of Psalm 2:9; the smiting of the Image, Daniel 2:34-5; the sudden destruction of 1 Thes. 5:3, I do believe are all, as one event, immediately impending.

What will you say to the King of Kings, our Lord Jesus Christ, when He appears, if you refuse to obey the divine injunctions, "THESE THINGS speak;" "Comfort (exhort) one another with THESE WORDS?"

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